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James C. Condos, Secretary of State
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The Joint Fiscal Committee has appropriated \$2M to help pay for the costs of conducting annual meetings in a different manner than normal due to the coronavirus global pandemic. This money, requested by the Administration and with the support of the Secretary of State's Office, follows the same approach we took to the 2020 General Election: no Vermonter should have to choose between their health and their ability to have their voices heard at annual meetings being held across Vermont in a few short weeks.

The funding, combined with the empowerments provided in H.48, which was signed by the Governor yesterday, will allow municipalities the choices and flexibility to conduct safe elections, and helps to remove cost as a barrier in those calculations so that municipalities can make the right decision for their communities to protect health and safety during annual meetings.

We stepped forward to be the administrator of these funds to help support municipalities through this difficult time. This made sense because we have just played a similar role with CRF funds for the 2020 elections and have a reimbursement process in place.

In order to administer the funds and issue reimbursements as quickly and fairly as possible, we are issuing the following reimbursement guidelines based upon the memorandum used for approval of these funds and the ongoing legislative discussion and overall intent of this funding.

Major costs to be reimbursed over and above normal, previously budgeted election expenses:

- 1) Mailing ballots to voters (may include use of a mail house)
- 2) Production of ballots (eligible costs include only any increase from prior years to accommodate use of a ballot and/or ballot mailing)
- 3) Return postage on ballot envelopes
- 4) Tabulator programming costs (for any municipality using its tabulator in response to COVID-19)
- 5) Production and mailing of postcards and other outreach to encourage voting by mail

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